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ARTICLES:

- (1) In Singapore speech PM Hatoyama declares Asia-focused foreign policy based on Japan-U.S. alliance

YOMIURI (Top play) (Full)
November 16, 2009

Mieko Kawashima in Singapore

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama made a speech in English on Asian policy at a hotel in Singapore in the afternoon of Nov. 15. He

expounded on the Hatoyama administration's basic policy of focusing on Asia and indicated that the concept of an East Asian Community, which he has long been advocating, will be the pillar of this policy. With regard to relations between Asia and the United States, he stressed that "the presence of the United States plays an important role."

The Prime Minister cited the economy, global warming prevention, disaster prevention, public health, and anti-piracy as some of the areas for possible cooperation in Asia. In the economic field, he said that negotiations for economic partnership agreements (EPA) with South Korea, India, and Australia will be accelerated. As to the membership of the East Asian community, he said "I would like to see an active debate on the ideal framework of the community," indicating his desire to discuss this with other countries.

With regard to the U.S., Hatoyama pointed out that "U.S. presence plays an important role for peace and prosperity in Asia." He explained that the Japan-U.S. summit on Nov. 13 agreed on further deepening the bilateral alliance and stressed that "the Japan-U.S. alliance continues to be the linchpin of Japan's foreign policy."

As part of efforts to support disaster relief and such other activities, he announced the start of a "yuai (fraternity) boat" project next year, using Maritime Self-Defense Force vessels to support medical and other activities of civilians and NGOs. Responding to a question from the audience after the speech, Hatoyama said: "We are not thinking of going into conflict areas to conduct activities. This will require legal procedures." He indicated that for the time being, the project will be limited to

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activities such as medical services in the aftermath of natural disasters.

With regard to global warming, he called for developing countries to use Japanese companies' energy-saving technologies and to set concrete targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

(2) Editorial: Obama speech: Japan-U.S. axis is the "foundation of stability"

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)
November 15, 2009

U.S. President Barack Obama made his first comprehensive speech on policy toward Asia during his visit to Japan. He expressed his determination for the United States to play a leading role in Asia as a "Pacific nation" based on its "enduring alliance" with Japan.

We welcome this as an indication of the U.S.'s determination to strengthen its involvement with Asia and tackle the issues of China's rise, North Korea, Myanmar (Burma), and so forth through the alliance. We also welcome his statement on the abduction of Japanese nationals that "there can be no normalization of (North Korea's) relations with the neighboring countries without resolving the abduction issue." Japan should respond positively to the Obama administration's efforts on Asian diplomacy and further reinforce unity in the bilateral alliance.

Mr. Obama said that he is the "first Pacific president" since he was born in Hawaii and grew up in Indonesia. This was out of his awareness of concerns both at home and abroad about the "decline in U.S. presence and influence" in Asia.

There is also growing concern in Southeast Asia about the rapid expansion of China's influence. The President spoke of strengthening U.S. involvement in Asia and giving importance to close cooperation with Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and other countries in the region. He stressed once again that the Japan-U.S. alliance is the "foundation of stability in Asia."

While making efforts toward realizing a "world without nuclear weapons," the President also promised a strong and effective nuclear umbrella (extended deterrence) for Japan and South Korea. On the North Korea issue, he said that "we will not be intimidated by

threats" and called for the implementation of the UN resolutions and the Six-Party Talks agreements and for full and verifiable denuclearization. He also demanded a full accounting of the abduction issue from the DPRK. This is a most reasonable approach.

On the military junta in Myanmar, the President said that the U.S. is communicating directly with the leadership but warned that the "unconditional release of political prisoners is essential."

However, there is also cause for concern about U.S. policy toward China. Discussing relations between Japan, the U.S., and other countries on the one hand and China on the other, the President said: "We do not seek to contain China, nor does U.S.-China cooperation signify a weakening of our bilateral alliances," but he did not go into a discussion of the rapid expansion of China's military power and its lack of transparency. While pointing out the need for human rights and freedom, he did not touch on the Tibet issue.

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It goes without saying that China should play a responsible role in such issues as the economy, the environment, and North Korea, but human rights and the military and security aspects should not be overlooked.

It is the role of Japan as an ally to fill in such gaps. Yet, the Yukio Hatoyama administration has aroused concerns about the exclusion of the United States with his concept of an East Asian community. It is looking at Asian diplomacy from a completely different vector. We reiterate that Prime Minister Hatoyama should realize that what is needed for Asia and the Pacific is leadership by the Japan-U.S. axis.

(3) Editorial: Obama speech - U.S.'s return to Asia welcomed

ASAHI (Page 3) (Full)
November 15, 2009

The United States has returned to Asia - that is what we felt when we listened to U.S. President Barack Obama's speech in Tokyo.

We were surprised that President Obama described himself as America's first Pacific President. The expression seems to have pointed to the fact that he grew up in such places as Indonesia and Hawaii. At the same time, it can be taken as an indication of the United States' strong determination to become deeply involved in the Asia Pacific region.

Following Japan, the President will visit China and South Korea after holding a meeting with leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the sidelines of an annual summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Singapore. The Tokyo speech was intended to play up the new U.S. administration's basic stance during (President Obama's) first Asian tour.

It was an important speech comparable to the one he delivered in April in Prague in which he outlined a vision of a nuclear-free world and the one he made in June in Cairo in which he urged the Islamic world to make efforts toward dialogue and reconciliation.

This time around, the message was also clear: The United States as a Pacific nation wants to engage with discussions shaping the future of the region and to join an appropriate forum - specifically, it wants to engage more formally with the East Asia Summit composed of ASEAN and six countries, including Japan, China, South Korea, and India.

During the era of President Clinton, the United States showed the stance of increasing its involvement in the Asia Pacific region, but during the Bush administration that followed, the main focus of the country's foreign policy shifted to the "war on terror," rapidly diminishing its presence in Asia as a result. The view is gaining ground in Asia that the unipolar dominance of the United States is ending due to the war in Iraq, the financial crisis, and other

factors.

The United States apparently wants to reverse such a trend. It is certain that such countries as China and India will grow into powers that drive the global economy of the 21st century. The view that the future of the U.S. economy hinges on this region is convincing.

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The United States still holds a predominant position in terms of politics and security, and expectations are high for Washington as a proponent of peace and democracy.

The United States' deep involvement in Asia is something Japan should welcome. For the stability and prosperity of the region, it is essential for the United States to build cooperative relations with China not only in the economy but also in other areas, including the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the battle against global warming. Asian countries are also expected to enjoy various benefits from (cooperative relations between the United States and China).

The President conveyed his idea for the United States to advance its Asia policy centering on cooperative relations with Japan. His plan struck a chord with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, who advocates the multilayered development of the Japan-U.S. alliance although he is tackling with the issue of bases in Okinawa. Japan should offer support for the United States' plan to join the East Asia Summit and other forums.

The President expressed his eagerness to achieve breakthroughs in the North Korean nuclear and abduction issues and in the democratization of Myanmar (Burma) through direct dialogues. We support this direction. We hope to see the United States address these matters earnestly so that the relevant countries, including Japan, can make combined efforts.

(4) Editorial: U.S. President Obama's speech in Tokyo: We should view his Asia policy as weighty request

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Full)
November 15, 2009

U.S. President Barack Obama started off his speech with his childhood memory of his mother bringing him to Kamakura, where he liked the matcha ice cream more than the giant statue of Buddha. His words of gratitude to the citizens of Obama City, Fukui Prefecture, who are like self-proclaimed supporters for Mr. Obama, created a warm laughter. It was a splendid speech that won the hearts and minds of the Japanese people.

However, the speech was not light at all. It was a speech on a comprehensive Asia policy that carries weight similar to that of the Prague speech in April, in which the President called for building a world without nuclear weapons, and the Cairo speech in June, in which he advocated a new beginning in relations with the Muslim world. It is based on his thoughts. His requests included ones to Japan that will likely turn out to be burdens on it. We must be fully aware of this.

Since it was delivered in Tokyo, the speech was full of consideration to Japan. It stressed the value of the Japan-U.S. alliance and praised Japan's international cooperation. He not only called for North Korea to abandon its nuclear development programs and return to the Six-Party talks but also urged that country to settle the issue of Japanese nationals abducted to North Korea.

However, the most important message is probably his resolve to have the U.S. approach Asia and strengthen its leadership. In the speech, he also mentioned that the U.S. as a nation in the Asia-Pacific

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region, will take part in discussions to set the future of this region as well as to participate in an organization to be set up.

This could be taken to mean that the U.S. will not approve the initiative of an East Asian Community without the U.S.

Regarding the economic field, the President indicated his view that exports of U.S. products to Asia will create jobs in the U.S., pointing out the limitation of the structure of Asian countries growing through exports of their products to the U.S. It is clear that he is attaching importance to national interests. This is nothing but a very heavy request to Asian countries, including Japan. It probably indicates that the U.S. is also in a difficult situation.

A stance of positive engagement in Asia was never seen when the previous Bush administration was in office. The President made his debut at the summit meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, which the former President used for his war on terror and political appeal on the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) issue. As a result, he was described as slighting Asia.

On the other hand, President Obama is highly popular in Asia as well because of his background that he was born in Hawaii and spent his boyhood in Indonesia. If his engagement policy, including holding a direct dialogue with Myanmar's (Burma) military junta, which is already under way, comes to fruition, China's ever-increasing presence in this region might be staved off.

The President indicated a policy of continuing to work together with China, because the nation will play a key role in pulling (the world) out of the economic doldrums and dealing with the North Korea issue, even though he noted that it has such issues as the human rights issue. The U.S. and China would inevitably deepen their relations. However, they must not decide the future of the region, based only on their own national interests and power struggle. This is what Japan should request.

(5) Great variety of guests invited to Obama's speech on November 14

ASAHI (Page 13) (Full)
Evening, November 14, 2009

U.S. President Barack Obama made his first speech in Japan on Nov. 14. The names of the guests invited to the speech had not been announced in advance. It turned out that among them were the mayor of atomic-bombed Nagasaki City, families of the abductees, entertainers, and so forth. There is an opinion that the variety of guests itself was part of the President's message.

Fourteen Japanese and American flags stood in the background of the podium at the Suntory Hall in Minato Ward, Tokyo.

Emerging from the hall, Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Tanoue remarked that, "I was deeply moved." Hiroshima City Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba could not attend because he was occupied with official duties, so Tanoue came as the representative of the atomic-bombed cities. He said: "The history of nuclear weapons is a path created by distrust. The President talked clearly about building the future of mankind based on hope and trust and on human dignity, and not on distrust and fear."

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The relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station remains a pending issue (between Japan and the U.S.). The Japan-U.S. summit deferred a conclusion on this issue, but Mayor Yoichi Iha of Ginowan City, where the Futenma base is located, was invited to the speech. He came with the thought: "I might be able to send out a message on the Futenma issue from the standpoint of the people of Okinawa and of the citizens of Ginowan." He said: "The President asserted that respect for human rights leads to security. I hope he starts in Okinawa."

Shigeo Iizuka, head of the association of families of the abductees and Mr. and Mrs. Shigeru and Sakie Yokota also attended the speech. Shigeru Yokota said: "North Korea is also suffering from poverty. The President said that the international community needs to make

concessions. He also said that a solution to the abduction issue is important. I think this is a clear message to North Korea." Sakie Yokota commented, "He is a person with a strong commitment to human rights. I hope things will move in a positive direction (toward a solution to the abduction issue)."

Mr. and Mrs. Yokota reportedly went to the U.S. Embassy on Sept. 30 for a meeting with Ambassador John Roos, where they made a request to meet the President in person.

Other guests invited to the speech included:

Movie director Takeshi Kitano gave the President's speech a score of 50 points because "it was predictable." However, he was impressed with the President's eloquence. (For Kitano) the attention grabber was Obama's memories of eating matcha ice cream when visiting the Great Buddha in Kamakura. "Compared to the Japanese prime minister, his presentation was brilliant, coming from America, the home of entertainment. If I were him, I would have had the national anthem played at the beginning to perk up the event. Well, he is admirable for doing all this despite his really busy schedule."

Mayor Koji Matsuzaki of Obama City, Fukui Prefecture, who has supported the President because he has the same name as the city, said: "When he addressed the citizens of Obama at the beginning of the speech, I raised my right hand in spite of myself. I really hope he can visit Obama City."

Masaru Sato, former chief analyst of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) who was convicted of breach of trust and other offenses against MOFA-affiliated international organizations, said he had no idea why he was invited. An inquiry came from the U.S. Embassy four days ago. Sato said: "President Obama, who was elected through a democratic process, pins high hopes for change on Prime Minister Hatoyama, who was also elected democratically. Great changes, including the review of the Futenma issue, can be expected through Japan's response."

Students and grade school pupils were also present. Eight female students of Tsuda College were given invitations to the speech as a "present" from officials of the college when they attended a briefing for overseas study programs a few days ago. Mana Takai, 11, a fifth grader at the Third Hino Elementary School in Shinagawa Ward, Tokyo, who lived in the U.S. for three years, attended the speech with her father. She listened to the speech without using the transceiver for simultaneous interpretation.

Professor Yasuharu Ishizawa of Gakushuin Women's College, author of
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the book "The President and Media," was also invited. He said: "The Obama administration monitors media reporting in Japan constantly. The guests were no doubt invited for a purpose. He can boost his popularity by inviting students and children, and the statements of former MOFA officials are more influential than those of the incumbent ones. They probably want to hear the comments of people from all walks of life and from different generations to gauge public opinion in Japan."

(6) Former Foreign Ministry bureau chief says cost to remove nuclear weapons for reversion of Okinawa was set groundlessly

ASAHI (Page 1) (Full)
November 13, 2009

Tokyo and Washington signed an agreement (in 1971) on returning Okinawa to Japan in 1972 specifying that Japan pay the United States 320 million dollars, including 70 million dollars for the removal of nuclear weapons. Bunroku Yoshino, 91, a key negotiator with Washington in the 1972 transfer of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty, has indicated that the cost of removing the nuclear weapons was set at 70 million based solely on Japan's rough estimate without a clear basis for the calculation. Yoshino was serving as director-general of the Foreign Ministry's American Affairs Bureau at the time. The aim, according to Yoshino, was to play up the significance of the return of Okinawa to the public, which was calling for the removal

of nuclear weapons, by giving the impression that the removal of nuclear weapons was a huge undertaking.

Yoshino will be summoned as a witness to a trial on December 1 over information disclosure regarding the existence of "secret documents" on the reversion of Okinawa. The former Foreign Ministry official revealed the above information in an interview with the Asahi Shimbun ahead of his appearance before the court.

The Hatoyama administration has been investigating four Japan-U.S. secret pacts, including one that says transit and port calls in Japan by U.S. warships carrying nuclear weapons do not constitute the "introduction of nuclear weapons" into Japan. Yoshino played a major role in concluding the secret pact designed Japan to pay the cost of restoring U.S. military sites to their original states, such as farmland. It has already become clear that the compensation of 4 million dollars, which was supposed to be borne by the United States, was included in the cost of removing nuclear weapons.

Placed under the control of the U.S. government, there were no restrictions on the introduction of nuclear weapons into Okinawa, and nuclear bombs, Mace B mid-range guided nuclear missiles, and other weapons, were deployed on the island. Given the situation, "returning Okinawa with all the nuclear weapons removed as on the mainland soil of Japan" was a long-cherished wish. According to Yoshino, he consulted with (then) vice-finance minister for international affairs Yusuke Kashiwagi on the breakdown of the total cost of 320 million dollars. Yoshino said: "We said to each other, 'Why don't we compile the breakdown for the total cost exclusively by ourselves? We have to handle the matter tactfully to keep it just between ourselves. Let's drastically inflate the (cost of removing) the nuclear weapons. The opposition parties are making a great fuss about it.'"

"We decided on the breakdown to ensure that the United States would remove its nuclear weapons from Okinawa. We did it as a Diet

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measure," Yoshino said, reflecting on those days. Although the actual removal cost remains unclear, Yoshino noted: "All (the U.S. military) had to do was to go to the port and load (the nuclear weapons) onto their vessels. By anybody's standards, it did not cost 70 million dollars."

In 2000, the Asahi Shimbun and other parties obtained U.S. government documents prepared for Congress that specified such items as the cost of acquisition of assets, such as the water supply and electricity systems built by the U.S. side, inflated labor costs due to the reversion of Okinawa, and the cost of restoring U.S. military sites to their original states, with no mention of the cost of removing the nuclear weapons. "(We knew) that the other side wouldn't care about (the breakdown)," Yoshino said. "(The removal) wouldn't cost the United States a thing. The entry of the 'cost of removal of the nuclear weapons' would make the United State smile and please Japan."

University of the Ryukyus Professor Masaaki Gabe, who is well versed on the secret pacts on the reversion of Okinawa, commented: "There were no signs that Japan consulted with the U.S. side on the grounds for calculating the cost of the removal of the nuclear weapons, and I have been wondering all along about how this kind of figure came about. The fact that (the government) has repeatedly offered a false explanation in the knowledge that it was not true is significant."

ROOS